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Jet loads mystery cargo as agent invokes CIA name

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A darkened Ecuadorean airliner was loaded with unmarked boxes at the New Hanover County Airport Thursday night as fighting escalated in a border war between Ecuador and Peru.

When a *Wilmington Morning Star* photographer took pictures of the Boeing 707 aircraft, he was accosted by a Spanish-speaking officer in a foreign uniform who waved him off. When the agent of the Miami-based firm handling the shipment was called to the scene, he shouted at the photographer: "The CIA knows about this. This is big trouble, big trouble."

Martin Feigenbaum, the agent, refused to give details of the cargo. He told photographer Dan Sears he had to call the CIA Miami office for instructions.

Reappearing, Feigenbaum said the whole thing had been a misunderstanding. The plane, he said, was scheduled to leave Wilmington Thursday night and fly to Miami and then on to Ecuador.

The U.S. Customs Service reported the aircraft was carrying "emergency supplies." The supplies were listed on the manifest as 40 tons of "foodstuffs."

Nobody connected with the flight would say whether the supplies were destined for Ecuadorean troops fighting with Peruvian troops in a flare-up of an old dispute between the two South American countries over territorial rights involving access to the Amazon River.

If so, this would mark the first known intervention by the new Reagan administration in a foreign con-

flict.

CIA headquarters in Washington, contacted by *The Morning Star*, declined to comment on the matter Thursday night.

Officials at the Ecuadorean Embassy in Washington were in a meeting and could not comment, according to an embassy spokesman who said nothing was known of the shipment.

The cartons at the Wilmington airport were on wooden pallets and hidden by tarpaulins. The pallets were being loaded into the four-engine aircraft by forklift from a truck-and-trailer.

The mysterious jet, looming over smaller private aircraft parked nearby, was loaded at Aeronautics Inc., a private flight service based several hundred yards from the main passenger terminal.

Few 707s land at the Wilmington airport, where Piedmont Airlines, the only major airline serving the airport, uses smaller aircraft.

The cargo was being shipped by Marvitec Export, a Miami-based firm. Feigenbaum, the representative of the firm, declined to discuss the shipment further.

The CIA has been known in the past to make use of Miami-based companies in connection with its South American activities.

Neither Feigenbaum nor Nelson Garcia, an airline representative who was at the airport, would say where the cargo had been trucked from.

There are several large military bases within a radius of 100 miles from Wilmington, including a large ammunition terminal located at Sunny Point south of the city.